

# REWRITE



## The Magazine of Effective Writing

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### CULTIVATE YOUR TALENT

There is an old saying in the Theater that without Talent you can do nothing. And with it you may still be a ham, or reach the stars. That truism applies to all the arts, to living, and especially to Writing, because art and living are both a form of confession. A person reveals himself through his thoughts and actions. And unlike those who perform in the theater, a writer has no "lights," no musical and scene directors to "make him look good". He has at best only an editor, whose blue pencil is for the most part negative.

What is "Talent"? It is basically the will to write, the imaginative skills, the techniques, the experiences a writer accumulates and his responses to them. It is his storytelling ability, his flare for timing & his genius for improvisation in moments when he finds himself in front of an audience without any prepared material. It is his cupid-ity and his generosity, his sense of anger, his tears and self-pity, vehement cry for a revengeful vengeance and, above all, a compassion and age-old wisdom. His ability and willingness to isolate himself, detach himself from the human race; to see what the ordinary man does not see and passes over day by day in the feverish rush of living.

In a sense a writer must be an "apostel". He must be dedicated to a dream, but he also must have the common touch. I have watched writers who have shut themselves up in a lonely ivory tower, and so deprived their ego of the nourishment it needed. I have observed others who never wrote a word, signed a contract without considering from each big angle, "what's in it for me?" They were getters, not givers. Yet creation is not so much an expression of the individual's talent as the mystery of life, the giving out of hope and comfort to a distraught world. It is the infinite finding expression in man's each year spring brings it forth in nature.

Creation requires sacrifice, concentrated effort without thought of personal comfort. He who would create must be willing to play the honky-tonks, to learn his routines, and to gain a practiced skill that is accepted, taken for granted. All this prefaces further strains and stresses of actual composition. I have never seen an audience or parts of it sit in at even the final dress rehearsal but which all members expressed surprise at the extraordinary amount of uninteresting, boring detail necessary to achieve the effortless sparkle of an average, rainy night performance. Spectators soon tire of the dreadful drudgery and exhausting re-taking to get things right. Left to their own initiative, they soon melt away, or say, "Very interesting, but what a way to earn a living!"

Yes, one must be an "apostel" in more ways than one. One must have the "spark" and the spirit that bridges the void between a world

of make-believe and the world of harsh reality. He must have the common, human touch, a feeling for the humor and the heart-aches of all humanity. He must, of all things, learn to project himself into the minds and hearts of all his characters, not just the MC. He must see them externally as the MC does. But with that all-seeing faculty discussed by B. Coursin Black in this issue, he must in his capacity as author and reader, certainly have an acute understanding of the personality behind each of them. He must make them "come-alive" as individuals instead of immutable, automatic forces.

This requires an adaptability, a chameleon-like quality that often on the surface at least does not appear to make for high type personality, a soundly anchored character or person that people in the real world can depend upon. That is why talent sometimes has created conflict, discord and misunderstanding between an artist and those who inhabit the world he lives in. A Beethoven, a Wagner or a Chopin, lives in a world within himself. His values are different from those of more worldly and less imaginative men. Without trying to excuse human failings or exalt a special genius, we have to recognize an apparent imbalance.

For the writer is susceptible, credulous, that he may draw within himself the experiences, the emotional responses, that enable his subconscious later to make more definitive decisions and give out with the meaningful symbolism that gives us other members of the human race a perspective on the confusing and complicated web of life. In writing as in every other design of living and human expression there are extremes. Few of us achieve the middle way continuously. All of us have our promises and our failings. Some of us shoot across the sky like a blazing meteor and then, like poor lost souls such as Oscar Wilde, go off at a tangent into the endless night.

That is what is meant by the second half of the saying: that even with Talent, commonly, without God's help and a strong, firm creative sense at the wheel, you may not achieve the promise of your star. There are deceptive and illusory way-laying lanes at every fork in the road. Timorous or fearful or over-confident, we may make irreparable decisions a dozen times in our brief span. The wonders that guided by our inner light, we somehow, sometimes stumble through. "To thine own self be true."

Talent in the final analysis, then, surely, is all of the things we have observed in this brief essay. But it is also the vital, volatile spark and touchstone of the human spirit irradiated by immortal fire. That ability to tell a story with the lift of an eyebrow, the quirk of a smile, a stare or movement of the body. The belief that life is rare. And we must bring goodness & dignity to it.

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<u>MAKE</u>	<u>William E. Harris,</u>	<u>KEEP</u>
<u>THE FREE</u>	<u>Elva Ray Harris,</u>	<u>AMERICA</u>
<u>WORLD STRONG</u>	<u>Editors.</u>	<u>CLEAN</u>

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## MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

Bill, Elva and Billy wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and an exceedingly happy New Year. May the Son of God whose birth we celebrate, fill your heart with goodness and a loving faith in God. No better treasure or defense can any man ask for.

## CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS AFTER THE ORGY

We have watched ten national elections in the years since Bill entered college. Never have we seen the Nation so relieved when it was over as after the current campaign. The number of letters we have received in which correspondents expressed their joy, not over the results, but that "it is finished at last," is extraordinary. We believe the result calls for sober thought and dedicated, creative action on the part of the Republican party. Now, if ever, it must show its enlightened rejuvenation.

The result although a landslide, is clearly a warning that the American people want a continuation, not of the political expediency and ingratiating subordination of moral principle which too often characterized the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt & negated its high idealism, but rather of that centralized and alluring interest in the well-being of the common man. We are not political seers, but we believe the Eisenhower administration will stand or fall in a single term on its ability to read the signs of history correctly, and to profit from the mis-

takes of Roosevelt and the outrageous criminal cupidity of an out-going president's political associates.

But this election of 1952 represents more than the turn of half a century and the beginning of a new phase in American life. It sharply indicated the need and the demand of the public for many refinements in our democratic system of government.

(1) It showed that campaigns are too long & tiring. The candidates could sell their principles more ably; there would be less smear and waste of time, money and valuable human energy if the campaigns were limited to six weeks or less.

(2) It showed clearly that in a time of historic changes in the world, a transition of nearly 4 months is too long for the new man to delay his taking over of the helm. More workable means of effecting the transition, a shorter caretaker administration are necessary. Here again, we believe that history will in part judge critically the Roosevelt administration for its devious and unforthright attitude in refusing to face or solve this same situation in 1932.

(3) The election showed the unwisdom of the battle deteriorating into a popularity contest between two men. The dignity, the responsibility of the office, was largely lost sight of. Personalities were substituted for issues and constructive approach to problems. Most of all, the importance of the congressional elections were passed over.

(4) The inadequacy of the Electoral College properly to reflect the strength of the minority party, was never so clearly apparent as in an election in which the defeated candidate polled more votes than most previous winners. The old machinery needs adjustment.

(5) (Here is an Idea.) We believe a permanent Hoover Commission, a kind of non-partisan & planning committee, that would study systematic means of making our government machine work better, would be a very good investment for the American people. Serving a like purpose to the several watchdog departments on whose shoulders fall the responsibility for better use of the tax dollar, this committee could suggest without heat or rancor, practical methods for making government more representative and more efficient. It could invent improvements in elections. It could codify existing laws, weed out duplications, & prove a wonderful housecleaner and simplifier for both Congress and the President. And remove from their shoulders much of the political bitterness engendered by essential & streamlining change.

(6) Most of all, this election has indicated that we have an able man in the Presidency, but that he needs continued strong suggestions from the common people as well as a line of "pols" & bankers for what we desire.

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### FUNDAMENTALS OF GOOD POETRY

By Elva Ray Harris

#### THE POETS WORKSHOP

Once more we gather from Maine, California, New York, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts (where are you people from the South & Middle West, Canada and England, etc., this month?) to discuss a Workshop poem:

#### COURAGE

Just like an ant whose sandy home  
A broom had quickly felled,  
Her world had tumbled down on her  
To crush the worth it held.

And like an ant escaping from  
His house of powdered sand,  
She started to rebuild again—  
This time, on firmer land!

Josepha Murray ~~Emms~~

(Note the "of" in line six. This is as it was written. In September and October, that darn printer (Bill) with an assist from the ditto proofreader (Elva) let that line get by in REWRITE as, "His house on powdered sand". We heard from it. You just can't let any inaccuracy slip by when you have such an alert group of Workshop members. So, all criticism sent in about "on" fall on our shoulders instead of Mrs. ~~Emms~~.)

Here is the first comment by Mary Billings: "GOOD POINTS: It is brief, understandable.. Its meter is correct. Its philosophy is positive and wholesome.

"FLAWS: 'Just like' and 'tumbled down' seem a little too colloquial, while 'felled' usually applied to the cutting of a tree, risks the suspicion that it was dragged in for the rhyme. The 3rd and 5th lines end in words, I would say, that do not deserve the emphasis given them by the line-end position.

"THOUGHT OF POEM: What seemed like a pleasant analogy drawn from observation of natural history, turns out to be not too well developed. 'Just like an ant—her world had tumbled down.' What she means is that: she, like an ant, saw her world collapsing. That is, the comparison as it reads is between the ant and the world, not as she meant it to be. Again, the collapse of the ant's house; this was caused by an outside agency (the broom) and had no connection with the type of foundation (powdered sand). The same destruction might have befallen an ant-hill that perhaps was built on a cement walk, though I've never seen one so situated. The last line loses some of its punch, therefore."

The second comment comes from Clarence O. Adams whose poem we discussed last time. He says: "I hope my suggestions will help in a small way. We all need the other fellows' opinion at times. It helps clear up our ideas

and thoughts. The poem starts in rather confused fashion. It sounds as though the ant, apparently, was compared to the world. This should be revised so as to clear up the picture and show the comparison desired. There are several superfluous words that could easily be eliminated: sandy, quickly, down and powdered. These all amount to padding, used to fill out the desired meter. They add not a thing to the thought." Mr. Adams sends in a revision of the poem in which he cuts out the awkward comparison in the first stanza, and carries through the continuity of thought in the second. Here it is:

Just like an ant whose home  
A broom had felled,  
She felt the loss of worth  
Her world had held.

But like the ant she faced  
The task ahead,  
And built her house anew  
Where faith had led.

The next two comments are interesting because of their difference of opinion. First we hear from Enola Chamberlin. "I don't like the word 'broom' here. It seems out of place, nothing in the poem seems to back it up. I would prefer: 'A violence had felled'. If we must use 'broom', couldn't we make it: a heedless, careless or directed broom, & also strike out the 'quickly', which seems to be thrown in to pad out the line?"

Mary Grant Charles on the other hand says: "There is an example in line two of the value of the specific word. For me, at least, a word like 'broom' suggests a picture, which saves the otherwise too common 'courageous' ant simile from triteness."

I, too, prefer the specific word that offers an image the generalization doesn't. We can see the broom sweeping, but violence is hard to picture. But Enola Chamberlin's suggestion that we add an adjective is good. A heedless broom, for instance, gives a clearer picture than just a broom.

But as Mary Billings says, we can't prove anything by the broom in this poem, because a broom could sweep away another ant-hill—though it were built on a solid foundation. Perhaps Mrs. ~~Emms~~ was unfortunate in choosing the ant and his sandy home for comparison with the "she" in her poem. The ant never seems to learn the wisdom of building up a stronger house. His patience is unending. But he does not appear to learn from experience.

Julia F. Polinski says: "In 8 short lines, the author has told the complete story of a woman whose life was composed of light, trivial things that burst into nothing in a time of trouble. Now she has learned that the age-old truths are the only truths. She is determined to erect a firm foundation composed of these truths, on which to build up her life, a foundation that will keep her firm—

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ly anchored, through times of trial & times of success."

If that is what Mrs. Emms desires to comment, and I believe she does expect to prove that the woman realizes a lack within which she is determined to overcome, rather than just that the woman is patient and persevering; then she needs to choose a more analogous form of life for comparison.

I disagree with Mr. Adams when he wants to strike out "sandy" and "down". "Sandy" is a picture word and it helps to give us an immediate image of the ant's home. Even though "down" is implied in "tumbled", the "down" is useful in adding the overtones of disaster. A tumble is usually a light fall in which nobody gets hurt. Perhaps a substitution could be made for both those words. Bessie Hartling suggests "crashed", but all I can think of now when I hear that word is a plane. (We don't often stop to appreciate what the constant use of cliché headlines is doing to a lot of expressive words. It is blunting them and wearing their meaningful edges down. A result that spoils them for the subtler handwork of imaginative craftsmen.) But I agree with Mr. Adams that "quickly" is not at all necessary. And "powdered" is inaccurate, for powder is a finer grade than sand. Iva M. Lennard suggests "scattered".

To Mrs. Billings I say "bravo" when she opines that "from" and "her" do not "deserve the emphasis" they receive in the positions at line-ends. Even though they aren't rhyme words, they do get extra emphasis for being the last word in a line.

Enola Chamberlin and Bessie Hartling didn't like the word "worth". They suggested "joy" instead. I don't believe Mrs. Emms intended to say "joy", but "worth" is clumsy. Perhaps she could express the same idea better in a different way.

Everyone who wrote in liked the poem. Mary Lothrop expressed her enjoyment of it in this way: "I like 'Courage' very much. It is the content, or thought behind the words, which makes the poem. It is the sort of poem that encourages other writers, and inspires them to try again when their structure of words, for example, has been swept into a 'useless pile' by some editor. I wonder if Mrs. Emms had poets in mind when she refers to 'she' in her poem?"

Next Workshop in February. Deadline for Comments: January 10th. Get them in earlier if possible. Be sure to enclose a stamped & self-addressed envelop with each poem which you submit. We pay \$1.00 for each one used. Every poem must be accompanied by a comment on the other fellow's poem. And do your bit to help the other chap anyway, whether submitting a poem or not. You'd like to get as many constructive comments as possible. If I have asked to hold your poem for consideration, please tell me if this is o.k.

February Poet's Workshop Poem. Here is the poem to be discussed in the February issue. Send in your comment any time.

### WATERLILY

By M. Lovina Cooper

Medallion like, on pad of jade-green,  
water-glossed,  
You float serene, in frame of beauty  
unembossed,  
On pool of malachite shot through with  
rippled gold.  
Around your pointed petals insects hum  
and bold  
Slim dragonflies dart sportively in flight,  
each one  
Irradiant-winged, and droning in the  
shimmering sun  
In ceaseless monotone. Prim pad and  
petals lie  
Upon reflected white and blue of cloud  
and sky.  
As censer to some Pagan god you raise your  
From whose gold throat its fragrant scents  
drift slowly up  
To float unseen, perchance to dim and  
distant goals  
where live undying, fadeless waterlily souls.

POETRY Magazine Covered by "LIFE". In the November 24th issue, LIFE Magazine reported the 40th Anniversary of POETRY. An illustrated piece with complete text of poems by early contributors: Sandburg, Eliot, Pound, Millay, Lindsay, Williams.

### DO YOU WANT TO SELL, OR DON'T YOU?

"Study the book!" If you could read a few of the letters we get from editors who compliment us for hammering on this principle, perhaps you would be more inclined to do it whenever you submit to a new market. Here's what Garry Cleveland Myers, HIGHLIGHTS FOR CHILDREN, Honesdale, Pa., wrote; "It is amazing how many persons send us stories and admit that they have not seen our magazine."

That is pretty silly, practically a waste of time. It's a million to one against you, that you will just happen to send an editor the kind of thing he wants, at the time his plans call for it.

The practical professional writer aims to remove as much of the guesswork as possible out of his selling, not writing. Being experienced and having learned his technique, which most inexperienced writers haven't done he has a reasonable chance of selling if he knows what an editor wants. But, and here's the big difference between the professional and the rank amateur. The former shoots for the sure thing, while the amateur just bangs blindly at the whole big blue sky.

Now take it from me, nothing is "sure". A professional has only a few minor advantages over you. And, believe me, over the long run they are minor. He has developed his production to the volume which enables him to employ an agent. But he still has to be skillfully able to satisfy one single editor. He also works more on assignment, because he's in demand. But he still has to be able to do a piece exactly the way an editor wants it.



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And how can he do that if he is not familiar with the magazine? Yes, the professional eliminates as much of the "by guess, and by God" from writing as he possibly can. Professionals are great readers. They subscribe to magazines, or buy them for months at the newsstand; they secure sample copies or get them at the bookshops that deal in recently discarded or remainder issues. They recognize this form of study as a reasonable expense of their profession and they charge it up on their income tax returns.

The important thing is that they read and often have a better idea of the magazine—a very possible thing—than the editor. This is because they can get a perspective on it and see the "color habits" and emotional inclinations of his mind. They spot the methods behind policy, the way an individual editor runs his department, and the ideas and emotions he likes to stress. And then, they serve him up, not a superficial imitation, a weak, lifeless dish, but rather the sweetest kind of story within the supposed limitations they can devise.

How can you hope to compete against that, unless you, too, have the ability to think through the needs of your market, and doing this, to bring to it originality, enthusiasm and applied skill? The answer is, you can't. The old saying is a true one, that the amateur writes, and the professional writes for a market. He knows, as nearly as anyone can, what the odds are against him and he writes only for the markets where he can get "even money" or odds in his favor. And just then, when he gets too choosy, and soft, a bright young amateur with a fresh viewpoint, and a willingness to do the hard work he formerly did, comes along and trips him up! A funny business, this business of learning to write and sell well, so you can supplant the boys who used to study the book and don't now because they've got an agent and are professionals who have all the markets sewed up!

## THREE PRIZE CONTESTS

The MLA—Macmillan Award, Sec. Modern Language Association, 6 Washington Sq. North., NYC 3, \$1,000, publication and royalties to members of the Association. Offered to promote sound research and the publication of a book that "contributes significantly to the general understanding of English or American literature." Closes: June 1, 1953. Address: as above, for complete rules.

Aunt Jemima Contest, Dept. 12, Box D, Chicago 77, Ill., offers \$100 every month thru May, 1953, for recipes requiring "her" pancake mix. (Box-top required.) Contest rules at local grocer, or as above.

Boston Daily POST, Boston, Mass., carries a short short story of 500 words from writers (women) in New England. Prizes of \$10 & \$5, with other 4 stories paid \$2 each. The prizes are spread so that a few writers will not monopolize them. Good practice for you.

## TWO POETRY BOOKS AND SOME NEWS NOTES

THE STUBBORN ROCT. Joseph Joel Keith. University of Nebraska Press. \$3.00. Seventh volume by this well known poet. These are thoughtful poems that are worth the time you may spend on a second reading. The table of contents can be useful as a market guide because credit for the publication of each of the poems is given to the publishers.

THE TROJAN HORSE. Archibald MacLeish. Houghton Mifflin Co. Limited edition. No price.. A brochure containing a play intended for a reading without scenery, written in verse—for the most part. The well known Greek myth the revival of which the author hopes will recapture the spirit of ancient days, and aid modern readers in recognizing a modern wooden horse. The propaganda motif is not too obvious, nor does it detract from the readers interest in verse.

WESTMINSTER, Thornwell Jacobs, Station C, Box 142, Atlanta, Ga., is reported as slow in publishing accepted poems, by one of our correspondents, who has had a poem held for about a year.

THE HOBBY DIGEST, E.J. Sharbatz, Box 52, Detroit, Michigan, confessing that it had held some mss. of another correspondent for along time, suggested it would be willing to have the mss. retyped, thus releasing the originals to the author. "In this way you would, perhaps, be in a position to find additional use for them." Certainly a considerate & friendly gesture. Mr. Sharbatz added: "When they are used (by us) payment will be made."

The FTC has issued a complaint against American Extension School, Portland, Ore., & Federal Coaching Institute, St. Louis, Mo., charging each with "false representations in the sale of correspondence courses."

A stipulation by the Bulova Watch Co. and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has been signed with the FTC to "stop the use of the words 'Academy Award' & 'Oscar'" where "no meritorious award is entailed" and the "right to such use is by virtue of a licensing agreement" only.

A similar stipulation has been signed by: Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co. (FAB), Proctor & Gamble (TIDE & CREER) Distributing Co., and Lever Brothers Co. (SUNIF), and Theobald Industries (HUM): that all of these detergents will not further be advertised as being able to wash clothes "as clean without rinsing & cleaner with rinsing than soaps or other detergents."

CUR DUMB ANIMALS, W.A. Swallow, 180 Longwood Ave., Boston 15, Mass., appears to find it, frequently, necessary to remind would-be contributors that "we use only pictures showing animals in natural poses."

This magazine receives a great many mss., most of which are culled in an annual contest.

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### TECHNIQUES FOR THE PROSE WORKSHOPS

Last month I rescheduled another workshop in the prose field and called attention to a weakness in the armor of many fiction writers. I referred to their inability to visualize what professionals mean by such technical devices as working scenarios and that useful trick of cutting a story up & shuffling the pieces around in the form of flashbacks.

Since neither of the workshops are scheduled now for a couple of months or more, I'd like to discuss some phases of technique in the handling of which writers achieve "body control" of their material. And do it not alone for their readers, but for themselves. All of this presupposes an ability to "see" a story in its physical shape that I do not believe many writers possess.

To me, a story has always seemed like the straight line you draw on a blackboard with an arrow on the end to give it a sense of a moving thing. Actually, this line transcends the story because it had its beginning long before the story physically began, and naturally, life does not stop with the end of a story. The characters go on to the next bit of drama in their lives. The line has neither beginning nor end, but for purposes of a story we say: this section here is the story we wish to tell. So, the first thing the writer does is to draw two vertical lines across the long horizontal one. One of these marks the beginning of the action, the other marks its end.

Now life moves chronologically, but a story rarely does. Have you ever stopped to examine for this one thing the stories, which you read and enjoy? I'll bet most of you do not. Therefore, the next thing is to build a gift for planting yourself on the sidelines and being able to form a triangle from where you stand to the beginning and end of a story on the line. The characters are marching down the line of interest with the arrow on it. But from your point of vantage your eye can watch them from the point where they enter the story to the point where they leave it. Actually, in your mind's eye you're able to see them before and after--in the past & future.

But the more immediate job in telling the story is to build a series of scenes, which are connected by breaks or narrative transitions. Each of these scenes is like a stick of type in a galley: lines of type, which a printer can remove from the bottom of tray #1 and put in the top of tray #2, or wherever, let's say, the lay-out calls for. When he gets them out of running order, the particular story or article becomes meaningless. A writer looks at his long horizontal line of scenes in somewhat the same manner. Laid in a strictly chronological order, they may be undramatic and boring; the story is slow. So he says to himself: let's tell the story in a

different way. He experiments. Perhaps, for instance, he cuts the final scene in two. He puts the first half of the scene right next to the first vertical line, where the story starts. Then the first chronological scene, curiously becomes the second. The story proceeds from that point in chronological line until it reaches the final scene. There the last half of the final scene is right up against the second vertical line, marking the end of the story.

The result of this tricky arrangement is a change in the way you, and the reader, view this story. Instead of picking it up as the triangular shape I sketched originally, you look from your central point on the sidelines first at a point near the end of the story. In your mind's eye you watch a small scene, really a part of a scene, then you flash to the beginning, follow the line and when you reach the scene you've already glimpsed, you jump to the second half of the final scene.

This is what is meant by making a pattern of your story. I recall a story that treated the whole "story" (the line of present "action") as a single scene. Then the author ingeniously made three "breaks" in the story's line of interest, spread the resulting parts of the line of interest far enough apart so he could insert two highly dramatic scenes. He took these out of the past (that part of the long line that preceded the first vertical line, i.e., the beginning of the story.) Thus, the past became the living, dramatic, exciting present of the story and the actual present became merely a frame for another story. In this case we picked up the line of the story at the first vertical line but then our mind's eye flashed back into the past! Moreover, at the end of the first interruption, it went back between the bracketing vertical lines, travelled a short way forward, then zipped back into the past and finally came back onto the chronological line and followed it to the second vertical line.

Now this is technical handling of scenario and flashback (the subjects of the workshops scheduled for May and March respectively, with deadlines for contributions, April 10th and February 10th respectively.) However, let me point out that before you start to write either a scenario or a flashback, it is essential that you understand with skillful precision why you are using them. Each is a sharp instrument that will cut a writer who uses them carelessly.

A dramatic scenario, then, becomes a blueprint which visualizes this technique of observing your story from a triangulation point on the sidelines. But it is more than that. It conveys something of the emotional quality of the scenes you pick up and move this way and that so casually. It projects feeling. It stirs you up to tell the story better. And flashback? Obviously it includes a precision-tooled beginning and ending which carries the reader into and out of it.

To be continued next month

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### SOME MARKET REPORTS

Yale Series of Younger Poets, Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn., is now open to poets under 40, who have not previously published a book of verse. No applications are necessary, but contributors should write in for the rules. Mss. of 48 to 64 pages ought to be submitted during the month of February in 1953. Started in 1919 at the suggestion of Clarence Day, this award has been given to 50 books of verse, which are printed at no expense to the author. He receives the customary royalty.

The Catholic Poetry Society of America, 366 4th Ave., NYC 16, has been sending its members renew cards stating that "Unless renewed, all memberships lapse on Dec. 31, 1952. To be reinstated thereafter, the fee is \$3: \$1 for re-enrollment; \$2 for annual dues." A prompt renewal will earn one the lower fee.

The C.P.S.A. BULLETIN, address as above, is well worth the \$1 subscription fee. It contains news and comment. Francis P. Kilcoyne is the editor.

The C.P.S.A. also publishes SPIRIT, a magazine of verse not limited to Catholics. An additional 200 subscribers would cut the cost of printing the magazine, it is said, about ten cents per copy. An economic fact of which the editor of every small magazine is acutely aware. As writers help editors to secure a wider readership, they help themselves to get larger checks. Tell your non-writing acquaintances about your favorite magazines & editors!

Bit O' Verse, Lirrell Starling, Box 143, San Andreas, Cal., a column in Burney's Shasta CHRONICLE, and also published separately with additional contributions of verse, by the editor herself, sponsored a Poetry Day exhibition of magazines at the Hillmont School. (REWRITE was included.) This display was so appreciated the authorities were considering continuing it indefinitely. Good!

THE WRITERS' WORKSHOP, Adult Business Center, 1554 Washington St., San Francisco, Cal., is holding a series of luncheon conferences during the winter with interesting speakers at each session. The remaining dates: December 13th; January 10th; February 7th. This is an unusually serious group of writers led by "Mr. Pfaffenberger" according to the October issue of Workshop's mimeo Bulletin. A writer calling him other than "Pfaff" would be in danger of expulsion, however.

CHRISTIAN HERALD, 27 East 39th St., NYC 16, reported itself as "overstocked" on fiction (Oct. 21, 1952). Our correspondent reports, "They seldom publish more than 2 stories an issue."

The Office of Education, Federal Security Agency, Washington, D. C., recently published a list of its publications, cumulative from January 1, 1949, with a subject index.

### A DAY'S NEWS AND COMMENT

CHILD SECURITY, "Chevaliers of the Unwanted Child," 1836 Cimmaron St., Los Angeles 19, Cal., offers prizes of \$300, \$150 & \$75 for "a short story, play or article." Length is 3,500 words (articles shorter, please). Must deal with "the problems of the unwanted child. We suggest the author let the characters tell or unfold all the situations... CHILD SECURITY does not publish a magazine, but will endeavor to market all meritorious mss., subject only to the policy and terms of the magazine accepting such mss." This firm states in its folder it "claims no ownership or royalty rights." Closes: Feb. 1, 1953.

The Benn Hall Associates NEWS, 47 E. 61st NYC 21, a provocative little publicity sheet, recently used a paragraph on "How to Get a Best Seller!" It related two specific cases of how an author's product was sold:

Case #1: a publisher (a publicity client of BHA) was interviewed on a TV program. A demon author contacted him with an idea. The idea was accepted.

Case #2: another publisher (same details as above) was contacted by a reprint house. It bought as a result the reprint rights—on a book it had previously rejected!

This gives you some idea of how the editors develop new ideas and latch on to authors. Also, it should teach you that "No" is a word that sometimes means only "Not now". We at WCS have our share of experiences, in which we have helped writers to revise mss. and sell them to the identical editor who'd previously rejected them. In one case it was a book-length, sale price several thousands of dollars.

"Persistence" is a word that every writer should memorize the meaning of!

Pennsylvania Poetry Society, Blanche Keyser, pres., Box 232, Harrisburg, Pa., tells us its membership is growing. It now has local Chapters in Altoona, Harrisburg, and "a new one in Easton, under the leadership of Mrs. Virginia H. Bragg." Out of state poets are eligible to join. (See mention of prize contests in November REWRITE.)

THOUGHT & ACTION, Roy Hessen, Jeffersonville, Amityville, N. Y., which pays for articles, has extended its length on fiction to 1,000 words. It does not pay for fiction & poems.

Boeing Airplane Co., Harold Mansfield, Seattle 14, Wash., is an address to file. He is director of public relations. He is the key man to consult when you want information or photographs connected with the industry's product.

Many such officials have extensive files, and are glad to assist bona fide writers to secure the necessary background material to sell a workable article idea.

## REWRITE

### THIS MONTH'S NEW BOOKS

**THE TV WRITER'S GUIDE.** Margaret R. Weiss... Pellegrini & Cudahy. \$3.95. A handbook by a TV writer under 30, who has been selling to commercial shows since 1941. About 40 pages, devoted to instructional material, and then 19 sample scripts of various types, with an introductory note and discussion by Margaret Weiss. A WRITERS' BOOK CLUB Selection.

**THE CHILDREN'S BOOK FIELD.** Jean Poindexter Colby. Pellegrini & Cudahy. \$3.50. A rather complete coverage of the writing, editing & illustrating, as well as production and publishing of juvenile books. The author is an editor and founder of "Junior Reviewers", a book testing service in which young readers express their candid opinions of children's books. A WRITERS' BOOK CLUB Selection.

**THE WORLD OF WILLIAM FAULKNER.** Ward L. Miner. Duke University Press. \$3.50. A slender volume printed in France, it discusses the differences between the town and country the author lives in and the mythical ones he created in many of his stories. It then considers Faulkner's use of his source materials. And traces Faulkner's transition from romanticism to disillusionment and then belief. A generous use of specific passages from stories and novels by Faulkner make this an interesting study of the creative impulse.

**THE COMPLETE SHORT STORIES OF W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM.** 2 Vols. Doubleday & Co. \$12.50. (Vol. 2, \$5.95.) It is good to have the life work in the short story field of this very competent craftsman available, even though it is in a relatively expensive gift edition. The first volume appeared some time ago. The second now published, includes most of the COSMOPOLITAN Magazine short stories which Maugham wrote for Ray Long, and other shorter, sketchier stories. Like the first volume, it carries a rather long preface. In spite of, shall we say, with a little regret, the author's perhaps unintentional, but nevertheless noticeable, patronizing, sometimes very caustic and often unctuously modest style, it and the preface to the first volume are required reading for all serious writers. No one understands technique or is more interested in how a writer's mind works than is Mr. Maugham. (That he is not the complete writer that he modestly pretends not to be, however, is eloquently proven by the final sentence in this second preface. "I have written my last story." One can admire his reasons for not writing any more, yet feel deep regret that a writer so skilled as Mr. Maugham should value the appearance he makes in print more than the end products of the art he practices. For the complete writer can no more stop writing than he can stop living. For him the two are well nigh identical. He must live to write, and write to live. And so he will strive to make the best impression he can, but for better or for worse, he must seek to communicate and share with his readers the tiny spark, however, weak & wavering, with which an immortal power has favored him. Such is his inescapable destiny.)

ored him. Such is his inescapable destiny.)

### A FEW MARKET NOTES

**PROFILES.** Justine F. Georges, Box 263, Portsmouth, N. H. It is with a distinct feeling of loss, we report that beginning with the January issue, THE SHORELINER, it is announced, will be absorbed by N. H. PROFILES. The new PROFILES, with a circulation in 48 states & 33 foreign countries, will be a larger, more interesting monthly. We recognize the difficult task Mrs. Georges has been accomplishing so admirably. A single magazine will be more economical, and in the long run should prove a better market for writers.

**PROFILES** will use the same photographs, poetry and features about New Hampshire & the Great Bay area. For a few months it may very easily be overstocked. But Mrs. Georges has been a friendly editor in the past. Renewal subscriptions are being accepted at the old rate of \$2.50 until after Dec. 8th, 1952.

**Michigan City Child Evangelism Radio.** Box 211, Valparaiso, Ind., uses a weekly "short story" of about 2,000 words, for use on "The Stories of Gospel Annie" radio program. The story must have a western setting, and must follow all the rules of good children's Gospel short story writing.

"If we accept the story, or the general idea of the ms., we pay the same rates as most larger Christian magazines. Due to our large coverage, stories must not hold prejudice toward any people or religious faith, but must present the Gospel message clearly."

This market was reported in the September issue of "Market Tips", the very readable & useful market letter of the CHRISTIAN WRITERS INSTITUTE, Janice Gosnell, 434 South Wabash Ave., Chicago 5, Ill. REWRITE exchanges with it. It may be subscribed to for \$1.

**INTRO.** Box 280, Grand Central Sta., NYC17, has just published the second in its series of "Round Quarter" 25¢ books of verse.

### RECENT BOOKS WE CAN RECOMMEND

**TELEVISION FOR THE WRITER.** Gilbert Seldes.. \$3. By an experienced critic turned writer.

**TELEVISION WRITING.** Robt. S. Greene. \$3.75. One of the better books for inexperienced & new writers in the field.

**THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF POETRY.** Anne Hamilton. \$2.50. Not a new book, but written by a poetry critic of THE WRITER. Good textbook.

**WRITING THE CONFESSION STORY.** Dorothy Collett. \$2.50. One of the few books on a special field. Author writes them herself.

**THE ART OF WRITING FICTION.** Mary B. Orvis.. \$4. Practical principles backed up by special references and individual illustrations from successful writers.



## REWRITE

### "I GOTTA MAKE TEN BUCKS BY FRIDAY!"

A teacher friend of ours and I were talking shop the other day. We agreed that perhaps the writer most difficult to help is a writer, who tells us that he or she desires to make some extra money right away. And to do it from writing. The reasons may be very urgent to the writer. And we can sympathize greatly with the writer. Yet we can also be aware that the need really has very little, or nothing, to do with the case.

Every good salesman will tell you that it is the buyer's need that counts and clinches any sale. And so an honest teacher must put behind him his concern for the would-be winner of a fast buck, and say instead, "Let's see what you have to sell, and whether your treatment or 'package' will make it attractive to the customer." Editors expect writers to be professional. If they can't give the editor and the reader who lays down his money what they want, the need for the money won't induce them to buy out of pity.

The reason why the writer who wants money fast is likely to be so difficult for teachers to help is that in Loring William's ingenious phrase, he does not wish to sell to the editor what the prevailing market calls for. Instead he wishes to sell what he's got and only that. The immensity of his need or his ego blinds him to the need of his customer. And he fails to see his own need of being a qualified craftsman.

I referred to the writer's ego because it is the experience of my teacher friend, and myself, too, that certain professionals, the teacher, the lawyer, the doctor and the minister, sometimes consider themselves qualified. Haven't they been using the published word in print and in speech for many years? Yes, but while the fundamentals are apt to be the same in all the arts and professions, a special skill is required. The form and the treatment in print are often quite dissimilar. All of the professions I have mentioned tend to be didactic, and you cannot tell the reader. You have to show him, lead him, cajole him, tease him, make reading easy for him.

My friend remarked that the older a person is, the less able is he to adapt himself to circumstances shaped by someone else. On the other hand a mature person has more to adapt with. A young person or a writer who's been successful on a local scale, often has much knowledge in one small corner. Therefore, a foreshortened vision results. Like the woman who has climbed the semi-automatic escalator of offices in the women's clubs, and has won a lot of club prizes, and therefore, assumes she is an experienced and seasoned professional writer. Which is frequently definitely not the case.

To me, these elements of a partial success or an urgent need to make money quickly are

often factors that make a writer exceedingly dangerous to himself. For when you cookily believe the world to be your oyster, or are filled with a dreadful feeling of insecurity, then is the time you are likely and very likely to jump before you have considered all of the angles. The great number of persons who come to us with their troubles, after having been victimized by the incompetent correspondent schools, critic-agents & the like, have fallen for these sure roads to easy wealth from writing, have been motivated by one or the other of these two instinctive responses to life.

But what is a writer to do? Where will he get honest advice? This the anguished cry of hundreds of writers who have had their fingers burned. It is regrettable that there are not more sources of reliable information, & courses given at reputable colleges on bare essentials of how to handle one's self as a writer. There are reputable agencies such as the Authors' League, the National Writers' Club, and books like the "Writer's Handbook" and the "Literary Market Place". And finally, REWRITE has a standing offer to advise, gratis, anyone who requests information regarding any advertised service for writers. We much prefer keeping you out of trouble—before it happens, to getting you out after you have been trapped!

To sum it up, writing, particularly in the feature article field, can reward the writer with persistence, intelligence and a nose for news with many small checks. And if the writer has the will to learn his craft, and to develop a program of steady activity, he can often build up a steady income. But as a source of immediate income, writing is indeed a long gamble. Better let an employer, who pays regular wages, carry that burden. A writer would do well to consider this method of earning a living as an avocation until he has proved he can earn three or four thousand dollars a year over a period of years. Even then, he should cushion any unexpected personal "depression" by a larger than average reserve savings account.

If a writer adopts the policy of believing that any cash return from his writing is an uncounted dividend, a kind of happy pile of "money from home", he will find that he can work more easily and that his morale is infinitely better. The minute you start estimating that this article or story is "worth" so much, or it must cancel out the grocery bill which is due on Friday, you put pressure on yourself. Tension begins to build up. You can't do your best work. First thing you know, you will find yourself doing things a man of character would be ashamed of. You'll become over-grasping or out the corners ethically—just to make that fast buck you need so badly. But if you don't have to have it; if you have financial room to turn around in and can count that check as unexpected manna from heaven, you will be apt to find the checks coming in oftener and for larger sums!

## REWRITE

### PLACE YOUR TIME BREAKS WITH CARE

Here is a little trick that many writers, apparently, overlook in the final typing of a ms. If you have a "time break" in the ms. space your typing so that it won't come exactly at the bottom of a page. Time breaks, its obvious, are those "holes" in the narrative where in the old days a writer typed a row of dots to signify the passage of time. Today, the best school of thought prefers a plain break of white paper achieved by merely triple or quadruple spacing.

You can easily see how confusing it is to an editorial reader to be in one scene as a page ends, and then on the top of the next, without any explanation, to start reading about a new set of characters in a different setting and at a different time. But this is something that can be easily fixed, if you, the author, know that it exists and prepare for it a few pages back by leaving off a few lines gradually and imperceptibly so that a break of clean white paper will show up before you get to the margin at the bottom.

This is just one example of how you ought to do all the housekeeping you can to render easier the task of reading your ms. Some editors buy mss. in spite of the poor typing and doubtful spelling, punctuation and even grammatical construction. But being human, a lot of them simply shrug their shoulders, and reach for a rejection slip. In many cases, a decision of "yes" or "no" is obvious, but in others where the decision is a hair-line one involving a number of related conditions, a well typed ms. is often the hair that sends the scale down in your favor.

This does not mean that a ms. must be one of those imposing formal affairs on heavy & stiff paper that resemble an R.S.V.P. invitation to a public reception to meet the president and trustees of Giddyap College. Indeed, I have talked with many editors & editorial readers who say that such a ms. appearing as if it had been typed by a professional typist, frightens them to death, besides seeming to have all emotional warmth, and personal individuality ironed right out of its starved, impersonal carcass. No, a ms. should be easy to read and somehow give out an indefinable, but convincing, suggestion that it is written by someone who knows what he is doing, and is doing it with quiet, enthusiastic vigor.

### THESE MAGAZINES WON'T HELP YOU!

The magazine that supposedly "protects" a new or "amateur" writer from competition by excluding "professionals" from its pages, is always an appealing, but illusory market. It will never help writers to sell in the professional market, because it does not teach one the minimum requirements of writing for an editor who has set certain standards and makes his contributors live up to them. The professional writes for readers who buy the magazines because they like them.

Basically, the magazine that promises the amateur special advantages is unsound commercially, because it has no circulation except the writers themselves. Therefore, its both a vanity and a lottery. Vanity because your prizes or checks come right out of the subscription fees you pay; a lottery because a few writers only get the checks, unless its one of those silly projects where you stand in line and wait your turn to be published, no matter how badly written your ms. may be.

The only person who wins in this type of a set-up is the editor and the printer. They take their payment for services rendered off the top, before you get anything. And, don't forget, having your mss. shown around to editors in this kind of a sloppy, second rate showcase, hurts rather than helps your reputation.

### TWC FOR THE RECORD

The Eugene F. Saxton Memorial Trust, Harper & Brothers, 49 East 33rd St., NYC 16, is nearing its 10th anniversary. Established in 1943, it has in almost ten full years awarded 32 fellowships to young writers with promising projects on the fire. Mr. Saxton, long the chief literary editor of Harper's, encouraged young writers in the book field. These fellowships represent outright gifts. They do not require publication by Harper & Brothers. Writers receive awards in poetry, fiction and non-fiction. They can make their own arrangements with any publisher of their own choice.

The COUNTRY POET, Edwin P. Geauque, Sanbornville, N. H., recently sent us for "the record" a copy of the royalty statement the contributors to the Autumn issue received. It is a masterpiece of straightforward accounting. The editor has taken his contributors, whom he considers vitally interested in the successful management of the magazine, into his confidence.

Mr. Geauque pays 15% of the per copy sale price into a pool for the authors. Thus 482 copies sold by subscription and 70 additional copies sold, earned the pool \$20.70. The 45 contributors therefore, earned royalties of 46¢ each per poem. But if the author desires to buy a subscription, extra copies or have his copies of the magazine bound as one volume, he can claim a voucher credit of \$1, instead of the 46¢. That certainly is a fair bargain; cash, or more: double the value in a selection of merchandise.

REWRITE believes that such an open-faced, cooperative policy should in the long period run offer considerable incentive to contributors to get out and urge other writers and public libraries, etc. to subscribe for the COUNTRY POET. As they help Mr. Geauque, they help themselves. This is no vanity job where everyone gets published who subsidizes the printer. CP is a painstakingly edited & fine job. It tries for quality. The sub. list shows just how small poetry magazines are.

## REWRITE

### NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

The new book by Edith F. Oesteyee, Christian Authors' Guild, which is about writing, in her special field, has been delayed. The publisher says, "not until Christmas or even later. That is a pity because many Guild members and other writers are waiting for it. The WRITERS' BOOK CLUB has orders for it. A letter to Mrs. Oesteyee or filed here at WCS House, expressing interest, might help. Mrs. Oesteyee has been very successful in getting writers started, or up the ladder, in juvenile and adult religious writing. The Judson Press (The Am. Baptist Publication Society) is the publisher.

The WCS Circulating Library now has a copy of "Twelve Cardinal Elements of Short Story Writing" by Agnes M. Reeve, gift of Kathryn Wilson. It is already going the rounds.

The F.T.C. has instituted injunction proceedings against Liggett & Myers Tobacco Co. "to halt allegedly false and misleading advertising of Chesterfield cigarettes." The Commission contends that "in truth & in fact, the smoke of Chesterfield cigarettes is an irritant to the mucous membrane of the nose & throat, Eustachian tubes, sinuses, larynx & trachea." The Commission is taking this action (1) in the public interest and (2) for the protection of competitors, who have been ordered by the Commission to "cease making" substantially identical claims.

Incidentally, the FTC complaint considers tobacco is a "drug" as defined in the FTC Act in that: "it is recognized in the 'Official Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the U. S.'", & also because the defendant in its advertising has "represented directly and by implication that Chesterfield cigarettes are manufactured in such a manner as to prevent irritation to the nose, throat and accessory organs of smokers."

In our professional opinion as a writer & former smoker, any supposed stimulating effect of tobacco, leading to increased writing production, may be largely discounted... If only because nicotine is said to be a depressant rather than a stimulator, the same as aspirin and other similar drugs. Energy and good health, other things being equal & taken into account, are the strongest weapons on the side of writers.

L. R. Bateman, U. S. Steel 935 Statler Bldg., Boston 16, Mass., is another director of public relations. He has charge of tickets for "pre-broadcast rehearsals in NYC of 'Theater Guild on the Air'."

CRUSADE FOR FREEDOM, Henry Ford II, 29 W. 57th St., NYC 19, has been making an appeal contributions of "small gifts of cash, messages of hope and friendship" for those behind the Iron Curtains. The cash is to help maintain RADIO Free Europe and RADIO Free Asia. Mr. Ford says these have had a success "which few believed possible". They've dis-

pelled fear and brought religion into homes behind the Iron Curtains, it is claimed. No better way has been found yet to encourage, strengthen & succor those who are our friends in dictator-ridden lands. Surely, this is a concrete way to spread the Christmas spirit and peace of mind.

### DO YOU INVEST OR GAMBLE?

Box Top Contests, Etc., Are Pot-Boilers. A lot of writers report from time to time the prizes they have won in these "give away" & advertising promotion contests of different sorts. We do not list them in the "B.A." column usually for several reasons. We do not like to advertise products that require the public to pay the cost of promoting them. A contest of this kind is often a lottery, in spirit if not in the letter of the law. The few win at the expense of the many. And although some of these contests are difficult and require real ingenuity, the emphasis is always on the "give away" and "easy money". REWRITE believes that for the most part they undermine national character, and by bringing out the predatory instinct, they chip away the finer qualities in those who "give" as well as those who receive.

Generally speaking, we think contests are pot-boilers and should be used as such. They absorb time, energy and sometimes money, all of which could be better employed on steady practice in regular writing. Contesting, you see, is a specialized form of writing, like Confessions or the Short Short Story. While a writer may learn certain basic minimum fundamentals of writing and selling, of learning how to satisfy an editor's requirements, devoting one's attention too long to a special type of writing with a limited approach can hurt a writer. He can lose his ability, and technical skill, for the broader variations of writing. We at WRITERS' COUNSEL SERVICE generally find it much easier to guide an all around fairly good writer than those who know only one field well.

Therefore, we strongly advise writers not to concentrate too long on this kind of contest. Use them to learn how to express your thoughts succinctly and pointedly. Or to be a good salesman. Use them to raise the money you need to finance your career as a serious writer. But don't let them use you, or permit the fever for excitement and "sudden money" get into your blood.

Scratch Pad on Every Desk. It's fine when you can concentrate on your writing and forget about everything but the "Cinderella" or Joe Black you are writing about. But even so it is nice to be able to jot down unrelated or related notes without having your "train of thought" broken by having to reach for a piece of paper and pencil. I keep both, (and other essential tools in assigned places) on each of three desks; no four! Further, I try to replenish these before they are exhausted, or have become dulled. It saves a lot of head-aches. Well, most of the time.

## REWRITE

### RADIO'S FUTURE AND YOU

A chap named Rush Rubin, commenting on an evening of musical acts at the Federal Penitentiary at Stellacom, Washington, made a summary of radio that may offer some help to writers. Writing in the Island LANTERN, the director of the show pointed out that "when you look at radio, you must look almost exclusively at network programs." And absurd as many persons may consider it, you are required to go along with the network premise that "radio isn't worthwhile unless it gets a heavy portion of the total possible audience of listeners."

Mr. Rubin therefore, sums up the three basic ingredients that radio has used to trap & hold listeners. These are Formula, Giveaway and Discomfort. He credits Ralph Edwards in his "Truth or Consequences" with transposing for radio the old formula of George C. Tillyou, creator of the "Steeplechase Amusement" park at Coney Island and Atlantic City with the fundamental principle that: "Money is to be made if you cater to the many people who confuse personal embarrassment and physical discomfort with pleasure." Rubin points out that many of the stunt shows, such as "People Are Funny", use this device of embarrassing people and making them uncomfortable in public to wring laughter from other persons who are easily satisfied with a low form of humor. And he adds that m.c. stars such as, for example, Groucho Marks and Phil Baker & Bob Hawk, use this trick in interviewing an innocent victim before he is permitted to be used to excite the envy of others by receiving a heaping supply of demonstration models of sundry merchandise.

"Formula", as defined by Rubin, is a type of show originated by Jack Benny and developed by many other top radio attractions. A radio personality or group of personalities are first lined up, then used each time in a separate and single "situation comedy". You can easily visualize what this means if you think through any of the Benny or Phil Harris shows. A situation with timely or universal appeal is chosen and then the special character-traits of the personalities in the troupe are woven in and out of this humorous situation.

Thus, you work with familiar and well liked characters as easily identifiable as any cartoon stock figures. As Rubin sums it up: "You 'break up' the half hour with music, & check you have a different 'situation' every week; let each show have a complete 'plot', but even that must be a projection of—your one central character, his stooges & sponsor!"

Mr. Rubin made in the remainder of his review one of the few constructive analyses of radio it has been my privilege to read. He pointed out that radio programs are built today: 60% for music, 20% for drama, 10% for comedy, 5% for news and 5% for miscellany.. And much of its humor is sheer mechanics, be-

ing based upon switches from old gags. Rubin believes that radio can offer a more mature form of entertainment, and that it has a great need to stop "thinking in terms of a set of statistics and start to think in terms of pure entertainment." He believes that did radio "do all of these things (most of all, set about improving its own personality, the presence it brings into your drawingroom) it would have nothing to fear from TV or any of the other mediums designed to attract a listener's leisure time."

The moral of this last thought is obviously that the writer who would make a place in radio for himself cannot do it in a single, dramatic flash; nor can he reform radio the while he does it. Except in rare instances, the new radio writer cannot hope to contact networks directly. He must first establish, and build a reputation that will make those responsible for network shows stop, look, & listen.

But if I read the implications of Rubin's article correctly, he implies that now with so many experienced writers going over to TV and radio battling for its life, the writer who hides his time and prepares his attack, may be on the ground or have the entree and the contacts essential to put over a better show, if and when the advertising and radio executives realize it is "time for a change". In the meantime, a new writer is wise to use Formula, Giveaway and Discomfort in some unique manner that will catch the eye of network and general listeners alike. Possibly this might be combined with the very formulaized "soap opera" sagas.

Don't Shoot Over the Heads of Your Public. And while we are on this subject, it should be profitable for every writer to look back and analyze the fate that beset poor Adlai. Rarely have I witnessed the vehement and angry violence that voters have used to phrase their distaste for his humor. A lot of voters did not understand his educated, Harvard sense of humor and they did not try to comprehend it. In the instinctive manner of the primitive man, who tries to destroy whatever is beyond the level of his intelligence to take in, these voters attempted to step on, and kill metaphorically speaking the man they feared. One fellow I talked to exclaimed in fiery wrath, "That clown!" I could just see him stomping into the Firehouse at the Center and plunging the point of his pencil into the ballot so hard it would go through & mark the wood beneath. If the Democrats intend that Adlai Stevenson shall represent a militant minority in the next four years, a neat job of bringing him and his grassroots audience into common agreement will have to be done.

WRITERS' BOOK CLUB Breaks a Record! On a clear, cold November day WBC received a book order that, including Book Dividends, added up to approximately \$150.00. Some royalties for writers there! Please get your Christmas orders in early.



## REWRITE

### A TOUR OF SOME MARKETS

**POETRY**, Karl Shapiro, 232 East Erie St., Chicago 11, Ill., announced in its November issue seven prize awards. With the exception of the Chicago Prize, offered in celebration of the Magazine's 40th Anniversary, most of these prizes are for \$100 and have been offered for a period of years, several for as much as 16 or 31 years. A substantial prize opportunity for poets, who should watch the type of material used.

**TODAY'S WOMAN**, James Skardon, 67 W. 47th, NYC, told a WCS correspondent that in spite of the journalistic and news-peg trend, announced in several writers' magazines lately, they work from 8 to 10 months ahead, as their schedule is less flexible than that of most magazines. Emphasis is on the young wife and with several important editorial change-ups recently, this magazine's current format should be examined and re-examined carefully.

**CRAFTS & HOBBIES**, Frederick Borden, 30 E. 29th St., NYC 16, which was a new magazine, as recently as last winter, has bought several pieces from the above correspondent, a set of sales she credits "solely to REWRITE—with a 'Thank you'." (Do you see how your helping us to cover all fronts of the various markets can multiply sales? A tip from someone else, or their correction of current data, can mean a sale for you, & vice versa!)

**PEN MONEY**, A. D. Freese & Sons, Upland Ind., quarterly magazine devoted to small markets, is a useful tool for writers because it has so many markets listed. A very helpful part of its service is the alphabetical index of all markets listed in each issue.

The **COUNTRY POET**, Edwin P. Geauque, Sanbornville, N. H., also serves its subscribers well with periodical News-Letter, which keeps them informed of new developments. Apparently, with increased support, Mr. Geauque plans added outlets for poets, such as some poets' cards carrying selected verse, children's and regional books of verse, etc. A feature is that a standard 15% royalty goes to the authors involved. Not large but welcome, and expandable as this market is widened. It is therefore, in the interest of a poet to spread the word to general readers.

**CITY LIGHTS**, Peter Martin, 580 Washington St., San Francisco 11, Cal., a new magazine that began publication in June, 1952, edited by three S. F. College graduates, prints "short stories, poetry and critical articles so long as they are honestly written at the top limits of a writer's understanding." It seeks to "comprehend and define a contemporary experience that is elusive & difficult. We are unable to pay contributors at the present time, but we have hopes of remedying the situation." Mr. Martin's response to our inquiry was friendly and cooperative.

Please RENEW your subscriptions Promptly!

### GOOD ADVICE ABOUT "ROBINS"

Some very helpful advice on the practical aspects of founding and maintaining a Round Robin for writers was given by Mrs. Florence M. Davis, WCS correspondent, in the October issue of LEAGUE LINES, the Bulletin used by the League of Vermont Writers to keep writers throughout the State informed of its activities.

"It is important not to have membership in a Robin too big or too small," Mrs. Davis opines. "Not less than 4 nor more than 6," she suggests, "because then the Robin comes often enough to sustain interest, but not frequently enough to be burdensome. And if each member keeps it from a week to ten days, it will come about once every six or eight weeks which is quite often enough, because there's always the problem of what to put in it."

"Usually when a Robin starts, each member has a stockpile of unsold mss. and so for a while it is easy to find something to put in to be criticized. But after a year or so the stockpile has vanished and a member is hard put to find suitable material. This naturally has its advantages because it keeps members on their toes to keep production ahead of the arrival of the Robin."

Explaining how a Robin functions, Florence continued: "each member writes a general letter telling of recent sales, market tips, & personal news of interest. Also a brief note addressed to each member in turn, putting in news of special interest to that particular person. Also comment on the mss. submitted. It is well to avoid taking issues on controversial issues such as politics and religion. And only constructive criticism should, obviously, have a place in these letters to the authors. Each time around each contributor takes out his last letter and mss., replacing them with fresh material. (Editorial care should be exercised to get the greatest benefit of first class postage, since Robins have to be sent First Class. Ed.)

"It is amazing," says Florence, "how well one gets to know the other members of a Robin, simply through correspondence. The help and encouragement derived from these criticisms is invaluable. It is possible to take a story or an article apart, revise it, according to some of the suggestions received, and send it out again, more often than not, making a sale. Besides the help, the striving to bring one's own writing up to the standard of others, and the exchange of ideas—often with persons living way across the nation—gives an ambitious writer an impetus, that nothing else can equal. When the Robin arrives, you drop everything, sit down to enjoy it, and glory in the realization you are not alone, but one of a great membership."

So long as a Robin is conducted in such a spirit and the members do not handle the job of keeping it going perfunctorily, it will be a stimulation. You get what you put in!

## REWRITE

### FROM ONE WCS FAMILY MEMBER TO ANOTHER

Here is the nicest compliment of the month and one that carries a decided point to it. A neighbor of Mrs. Eleanor M. Jewett wrote us recently about the latter's new juvenile novel, "Felicity Finds a Way". It is a historical novel, and the neighbor has herself done quite a bit of historical writing that has been published or used professionally.

"Hasn't she done a beautiful job! So much hard research and no obvious or dull use of it. I am awfully proud of her."

That is the real test of a writer's ability. To be able to spend months digging out trivial details of setting and general background, and then to make the story sparkle. To write as if one had not swallowed the encyclopedia. To make those dull facts "come" alive. It's partly the author's own enthusiasm, but it's also his or her ability to let the reader "identify" himself with the MC, to feel the background and the action so vividly that he imagines he is a part of it.

That calls for projection of emotion by a writer. You have to cultivate the trick and the technique of reliving everything, putting it into the present tense instead of the past. Of dramatizing instead of telling it. If Felicity, for example, walks through the burned over section of lower Manhattan that was never rebuilt during the occupation by a British garrison, we must see and feel that desolate gauntness. Mrs. Jewett uses effectively a doorstep that leads only to a cellar hole. Similarly she knows that the retiring redcoats turned over the keys of the city to one of General Washington's officers but also jammed the halyards and greased the flag pole at the Battery. She shows it in a scene.

### DON'T BE FOOLED THIS WAY!

Writers should bear in mind that for most practical purposes the high priced, commercial short story is practically dead. Except for such never-failing markets as the AMERICAN and COLLIER'S, there is no real demand for slick short shorts. The only place you can sell these brief fiction pieces, on a continuing basis, is in the secondary and very small magazines. Because of space limitations, these require a goodly supply and welcome the story that is under 2,000 words. (Not all such stories, however, are formula short short stories. Many are miniature and tightly written short stories, which is not the same thing technically as the one scene short short story.)

Reason I bring this up here is that critic-agents and some of the advertised (mail-order) courses in writing still try to persuade gullible writers that there's a fortune to be made easily from the short short story. This is not true. Editors have given up on the short short story because it is much too hard to induce highly paid professional writers to expend the necessary ingenuity &

energy on a story that will only earn them a fraction of what a longer short story will.

The tragic experience of one writer dramatizes my point. He read a book by a popular and controversial author, who explained his own rise to regular selling via the newspaper syndicate short short story. (This field is now completely dead.) Our friend expended several years trying to duplicate the author's success, only to find he was driving a dead horse. The book has not been brought up to date or edited, so far as we know, to prevent such a calamity.

There are a few good books on the genuine short short story. (I contributed a summarizing chapter to one of them, which was published by THE WRITER.) But these should always be read now for the perspective offered on the fundamentals of effective fiction rather than as a textbook to follow implicitly. I made the distinction between a short short story and the miniature type of short story clear in my chapter in "Writing the Short Short Story".

"We Write It, You Sign It." And while we are on this subject, it seems hardly necessary to warn writers about the hoax of that so-called easy backdoor into publication. A writer who cannot handle words properly usually does not have an abundance of ideas; editors will clemor for. There are exceptions such as big name personalities or experts in technical fields, who may land squarely and unexpectedly in the news. But in such occasional and isolated instances the editor is the one to seek a rewrite man. And he looks for an experienced, practicing newspaperman or author, preferably one familiar with the subject. In no case do they seek the advertising critics, who state they will collaborate, edit, and revise for a fee. Over the past years I have personally seen the "work" of a number of these transposers and rehash men. For the most part it represents worthless drivel. Moreover, editors steer clear, because the question of ownership of books, that have been co-authored or ghosted isn't always clear. Legal problems and unfavorable publicity may arise. Expensive complications.

There is no substitute for knowing how to write. If you have salable ideas, and understand how to present them effectively, there are a very few competent specialists able to help you put the final polish on, or to use better strategy in achieving the full punch. But "we write it, you sign it," no. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, no! As a dramatist with at least one Broadway success behind wrote to us only yesterday, "It is so difficult to make would-be writers face the necessity of learning the technique...and if you have had even a small success, they believe you did it in an absent moment, without toil."

Yes, the common fallacy is that everyone's able to speak and write English today. So, everyone is competent to write a book. No!

## REWRITE

### HOW'S YOUR BATTING AVERAGE?

Acceptances reported or seen by us during the past month:

Helen Langworthy

Articles: STATE JOURNAL (Mich.), FRONT RANK.

Juvenile Story: MICHIGAN FARMER.

Joseph Murray Evans

Poems: Kansas City Poetry Mag., SCIMITAR & SONG, NEW ATHENEUM, The Hartford Times, AM. WEAVE.

Charlotte Norlin

Ill. Article: Topeka Daily CAPITAL.  
Correspondence: K.C. STAR, Wichita Beacon.

Naomi Ingalls

Recipes: RURAL NEW YORKER, Boston POST.

Mary Grant Charles

Poems: Canadian POETRY, COUNTRY POET, & WESTMINSTER Magazine.

Ethel M. Eaton

Articles: TODAY'S WOMAN, CRAFT HORIZONS and CRAFTS & HOBBIES.

Peggie Schulz

Articles: (Ill.) FLOWER GROWER, WESTERN LIVING (Canadian).

Dr. Belle S. Mooney

Book: "Sex & Society" to Cadillac Pub. Co.

Frances Durland

Article, C. S. MONITOR.  
Juvenile Story: YOUNG PEOPLE.

NOTE: send in your market notes.

Remember the Fiction Workshops:

Flashback: give us your idea of a flashback with the transitions that lead into and out of it. Keep it brief. You can do it in very few words. Closes: February 10th.

Dramatic Scenario: study the series of articles beginning in this issue. Then write an emotional blueprint of the story you want to write. Pretend the editor is standing right in front of you, and you want him to give a go ahead signal. Sell him before he can say "No". Closes: April 10th. \$1 is paid for my ms. we use in either workshop.

Give REWRITE for Christmas: Because we accept no advertising, we depend on our readers for support. Help us to help you.

The Writer's Handbook, which was revised, in March of this year, will probably not be given a new edition "until March, 1953 anyway," according to A. S. Burack, editor.

The Writer's Market was revised at almost the same time, and will probably not be re-edited till some time in 1953 also. The two manuals sell for \$4.50 & \$3.50 respectively.

### LATE NEWS OF MARKETS

The VINCENTIAN, Vincent G. Kaiser, 1849 Cass Ave., St. Louis 6, Mo., a "general circulation Catholic Family magazine," attempts "to show the life of the Church, with emphasis on the activities and devotions of the 'Double Family' of St. Vincent de Paul."

Feature articles: 1800 - 2500 words. Pays \$2 - \$4 for good black-and-white glossies. Uses such illustrated articles in preference.

Fiction: 1500 - 2500 words. Family, children, romance and religious themes. Reflecting a Catholic philosophy.

Verse: Inspirational, religious, nature, not over 20 lines.

Fillers: Humorous, original anecdotes based on Catholic family life. 400 words top. \$2 - \$6, based on merit.

Pays on Acc. at 1¢ for prose, 30¢ per line for poetry. We believe this to be a specialized market. But the rejection slip gives a detailed picture of requirements. It's dated as having been revised as of August, 1952.

Federal Trade Commission: has ordered American Greetings Corp., one of the 3 or 4 largest manufacturers of greeting cards to discontinue unfair and discriminatory practices including agreements with its retail buyers to junk & destroy, or make difficult the identification of competitors' stocks.

The Centro Mexicano de Escritores, Mexican-North-american Institute of Cultural Relations, Yucatan 63, Mexico, D. F., has been formed. The Rockefeller Institute has given some scholarships for study of the position of the writer in the above hemisphere & Margaret Shedd, creative writer and teacher of writing at Stanford University and the Mexico City College, is an active member of the board of directors. She believes the writers in both countries can benefit by better co-operation. She says that Mexico offers "low-cost printing of high craftsmanship", which might stimulate book publishing here.

New Little, Brown & Co. NYC Editor. Ned Bradford has replaced Mr. Woodburn, who has died.

Indiana Council for the Appreciation of Poetry, Clarence C. Adams, 7077 W. 24th Ave., Gary, Ind., is apparently doing a fine task in promoting poetry under the leadership of Clarence and Marie L. B. Adams. In addition to the usual Poetry Day celebrations, there have been two 15-minute programs on Station WGRY, Gary, Ind.

Writers should always back up such events with letters of approval that are sincere & calculated to bring out their very real interest to and appeal for large numbers of readers and listeners. That way, you will cause more programs to be offered.

## REWRITE

### THERE IS NO "FINAL" WORD

It is always good to have the same fundamentals expressed in different ways. One of our friends and member of the WCS Family, expressed some of the thoughts we have pounded in REWRITE very well the other day. Taking off via a set of definitions, he "kicked around" that most difficult subject, the illusion of reality. It may help some writers to "see" the ideas in question better.

B. Coursin Black commented that all of us read for three primary reasons: Contrast, as a means of affording stories portraying life quite different from our own. Replacement, i. e., we seek to replace the "little frets that nag, the little problems that chase their own tails through our weary minds...A story replaces these personal frustrations by giving us something different to fret us. It's fun to witness the tribulations of another." And finally, Replacement "enables us to live the double life, to explore new pastures without leaving our own grazing. How does the other guy meet his problems?"

"Not that we usually select reading for a specific purpose. But the need for contrast, replacement or expansion drives us to print—explore other lives. The story must create a new world, introduce new people, translate new experiences."

Mr. Black clashes with the accepted theory of reader identity, and perhaps expresses it better. He says: "The reader, as I see it, does not identify himself with any character. The reader is always himself, and knows that he is himself. He is not the Sultan in the harem; he is Joe Blip enjoying the fun-making of the Sultan and appreciating this, through his own frustrations. He must be aware of his own denials to obtain meaning—from his reading. The bored mechanic flying to Venus, knows perfectly well he is sitting in a grubby little room in Brooklyn. He gets to know and like—or dislike—the hero but at no time is he the hero."

At this point I would like to interject a thought that like everything in writing and life, too, this matter of phrasing is really a horse trade. You pay your money and you get something and give something. I personally like Coursin's idea of the reader keeping his own sense of individuality, but visualizing the scene in front of him with the real god-like perspective. He can see around the scene, taste all its implications & overtones as it is never possible to do in real life.

But there is also the other side of a coin. Some stories, like the handsome hero, sweep us off our feet. Just as the heroine wishes to be swept away. The sheer magic of a storyteller catches us up. I know I have once or twice come back to my "grubby little room in Brooklyn" with a start and realized that for a few delirious moments have experien-

ed a life other than my own.

I agree with Coursin, however, in the basic premises he sets down. "The writer must, naturally, set the scene, supply emotionalized overtones, physical incidents. But he cannot dictate reader-reaction. The reader wishes to hear and see and know everything, that goes on, but he does not want signposts from the author telling him when and whom to applaud."

"One lives with a good story. The illusion of reality will be lost if the author tries too hard to create a reader-identity character. The stage director belongs in the wings. The dime-store salesgirl who turns to a confessional story, never, in her own mind, becomes the somewhat tarnished heroine. As a tired, lonely, romantic-starved girl she desires to meet new people who find the happiness she craves. By not becoming the heroine she preserves her own perspective. She is the all-knowing observer. (This is a strong point. But I think that Coursin and I agree fundamentally that if the story merely lets the reader remain a neutral and detached observer, it will fail.)

That is where so many of the literary and quality-type stories miss out. They are exclusively concerned with the intellectual & mental or psychological aspects of the story. They forget or look down upon the "emotional" projection that every good story is equipped with. Unless the reader feels, and takes sides, at the same time he observes, a story only holds part of him.

The radio has provided an interesting test of this side of story-telling. I have noticed that I can read an ordinary story & listen to some types of light or slight radio programs. I can absorb what the radio & the ms. or book I am reading, are telling me. If either the radio or the material I am reading require full intellectual and emotional attention, I quickly give up one or the other. If the intellectual ideas being discussed on a radio program become so interesting (emotionally appealing) that I wish to live with them, I lay down the book. Or if I begin to "identify" myself emotionally with a story, I feel the urge to shut off the radio. In other words I cease being merely the detached observer.

As a final word, I'd like to emphasize an important truism. No one who teaches or attempts to show others the way, has an exclusive patent on the only method. As in scientific exploration, we are all of us co-workers, and the only test for membership is as the Bible says it: "clean hands, and a pure heart." And, above all, the desire to aid a common search for the truth and the Way. We all of us are learners to the end of our days if we are true craftsmen. And each is a contributor, if only sometimes with a phrase, a vivid revisualization of the eternal truth. I learned much from Coursin's rethinking.